



# **THE BECKFORD NEWSLETTER**

**NO 52 FEBRUARY 2020**



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**SATURDAY 6 JUNE**



**AT PAINSHILL PARK**

**BOOKING FORM ENCLOSED**

## BECKFORD LECTURE 2019

Forty members and guests attended the annual Beckford Lecture on 17 October, when Dr Stephen Lloyd lectured on '*A fairy palace*' and '*a desert of magnificence*'; *Richard Cosway's 20 Stratford Place* and *William Beckford's Fonthill Abbey*.

The lecture will be printed in this year's Beckford Journal.

## A VISIT TO POWDERHAM SATURDAY 4 APRIL



The visit to Powderham Castle, seat of the Earl of Devon, will take place on Saturday 4 April. Charlie Courtenay, Earl of Devon will guide us around the house, grounds and belvedere.

So many members responded to the announcement in the last Newsletter, that we have now reached the maximum number. If you would like to be added to the waiting list in the event of any cancellations, please let the Secretary know.

cover photo: Ruined Abbey, Painshill

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM will be held at Painshill Park, near Cobham, Surrey on Saturday 6 June.



Painshill: Gothic Temple

We first visited Painshill in 1998, and last held our AGM here in 2005.

Painshill was created by Hon. Charles Hamilton (1704-1785) uncle of William Beckford's mother and youngest son of James, the sixth Earl of Abercorn. In 1738, he purchased some 300 acres of land and began creating his own 'pleasure garden', with a serpentine lake, grotto and other architectural features. He was forced to sell the estate in 1774 and moved to Bath where he continued to plant and create gardens.

Since the creation of the Painshill Park Trust in 1981, an extensive programme of restoration has returned the garden to its eighteenth-century scheme. The grotto has been recreated, and visitors can follow Hamilton's

walk around the landscape passing other extraordinary buildings including the Turkish Tent, Ruined Abbey, Gothic Tower and Hermitage. The Temple of Bacchus is the latest building to be restored.

CHARLES HAMILTON:  
OUR MOST HOLY UNCLE

In 1781, William Beckford paid a visit to his great-uncle in Bath. Before the visit he wrote to Lady Hamilton that his mother ‘urges me without ceasing to visit our most holy uncle at Bath, the everlasting C... H... who, it seems, is building a house to his gardens and adding peach house to grape and pinery to pinery on the slope of the Crescent Hill, which is already more than half embroidered with his vagaries’.

BERNARD NEVILL’S  
FONTHILL

In 1977, Professor Bernard Nevill purchased the 1850s stable block of William Burn’s Fonthill Abbey.

Photographs of the cluttered interiors filled with the spoils of country house sales and architectural salvage were commissioned by Min Hogg, the founder/editor of *World of Interiors* just before illness forced Nevill to sell Fonthill and his London house in 2011.

The photographs by James Mortimer have now been published together with an article ‘Positively Victorian’ by Ruth Guilding. *World of Interiors*, February 2020, pp 102 – 111.

OLD FONTHILL ABBEY  
GROUNDS

The grounds of Old Fonthill Abbey will be open to the public on two Sundays in May.



Visitors (and dogs on leads) will be able to explore marked paths through bluebell woods, rhododendrons and around Bitham Lake (please note: some paths are steep and rugged). The grounds will close in the event of high winds. (Stourhead’s example will be followed; if in doubt, please check with NT website).

Refreshments all day: barbecued sausages, soup, cakes, tea and coffee

In aid of Parkinsons UK and local charities. Donations at gate.

Sunday 3 and 17 May

10.00am – 5.00pm.

Entry is by Stonegate Lodge SP3 6SP on Hindon-Newtown Lane.

Group visits are welcome at other times. Please email enquiries to [bjmorant@gmail.com](mailto:bjmorant@gmail.com)



## FONTHILL HOUSE GARDENS

Lord Margadale is opening the gardens of Fonthill House for charity on three Sundays this year.

The present Fonthill House was built by John Morrison, first Lord Margadale, in 1973 on the foundations of an earlier house, Little Ridge, designed by Detmar Blow for Hugh Morrison.

In recent years, Lord Margadale has undertaken extensive redevelopment of the garden with designers Tania Compton and Marie-Louise Agius.

Surrounding the house are formal gardens with mixed planting of shrubs, herbaceous perennials, bulbs and annuals. There are old and new sculptures, including a water feature by William Pye.

North of the house are woodland walks with azaleas, magnolias, tall majestic oaks and an oak house made from young saplings.

Sunday 22 March (NGS)

Sunday 10 May (in aid of local churches)

Sunday 7 June (in aid of pancreatic cancer)

12 noon – 5.00pm

Adults £7. (Car of 3 + £15)

Children free.

Light refreshments. Dogs on leads welcome.

Fonthill House, Tisbury SP3 5SP

## BILL TOMLINS 1927 - 2019

*Bill Tomlins was our guide when we visited Painshill in 1998 and 2005.*



Bill Tomlins.

Photo: Jan Clark

Bill Tomlins, a member of the Beckford Society since May 1996, died on the 28th October at the age of 92. Bill was born in Walton-on-Thames Surrey and attended Ardingly College where his weekend excursions into the Sussex countryside prompted his lifelong love of walking and nature, particularly his love of trees.

Bill enjoyed two long and successful careers. He initially ran his family's chamois leather business but after his retirement at 60 his life took a totally different turn and he became involved with the restoration of the celebrated eighteenth century English landscape garden at Painshill in Surrey and was able to combine three of his favourite subjects - gardening, history and poetry.

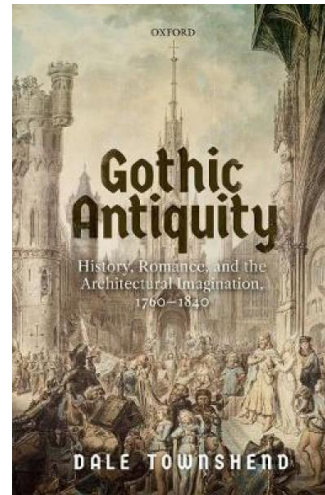
Bill became the principal guide and speaker and carried out a

## GOTHIC ANTIQUITY

remarkable 942 tours and 320 talks and study days - mainly at Painshill, but also at other gardens, institutions and the University of Surrey. He was very popular and had a broad knowledge of garden history through the centuries. His favourite adage was - if you want to learn, teach. In 2012 Bill was awarded an honorary doctorate by Writtle College in recognition of his services to garden history.

Personally Bill was a good and dear friend who not only encouraged and inspired me but also helped many others at Painshill. Bill's unexpected second career brought him much pleasure and happiness and fortunately he lived to see Painshill almost fully restored. He will be greatly missed.

JAN CLARK



Dale Townshend in *Gothic Antiquity: History, Romance and the Architectural Imagination, 1760-1840* provides a fascinating account of the relationship between Gothic architecture and Gothic literature (fiction, poetry and drama) in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

One section is devoted to William Beckford's architectural imagination. He 'occupied the most complex, vexed, and often surprising relation to the aesthetics of architectural associationism'. (pp. 78 – 88).

Among the illustrations are Beckford's editorial marks in his personal copy of *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents*, and 'Castello di Otranto' a plate from his copy of Jeffery's 1796 edition of Walpole's novel.

Oxford University Press, 2019. 448 pages. £75

## BECKFORD'S TOWER

In recent months, two major announcements have been made concerning Beckford's Tower. In October, Historic England announced that the Tower had been added to their 'at-risk' register. Then, in December, the Heritage Lottery Fund announced the good news that the tower had been awarded £422,600 to help Bath Preservation Trust progress plans for the redevelopment project 'Our Tower: Reconnecting Beckford's Tower and landscape for all'.



Grotto Tunnel, from Edmund English, *Views of Lansdown Tower, Bath*. 1844

This grant will enable the project to progress towards applying for a full Heritage Lottery grant of £2.5m. The project will address the Tower's urgent conservation needs and also create a new museum, restore the Grotto Tunnel, improve access to the cemetery, create new footpaths, produce interpretation and trails for the lost Tower landscape and use renewable energy to illuminate the Tower for all to see and enjoy.

Thanks to this funding, work to develop the project towards the Stage II lottery application will start this year. One essential element is matching funding, for which the Bath Preservation Trust aims to raise £1m.

The Lottery announcement resulted in a third leader in *The Times*, 30 Dec 2019. Headed 'Pure Folly: An eccentric treasure of 19th-century architecture is being saved for the nation', the text of the article began: 'To live in an ivory tower is a modern cliché, but this 19<sup>th</sup>-century metaphor had a real-life inspiration'.

If you would like to learn more about the project and how you might help, please contact Courtney Fleming at the Bath Preservation Trust Tel: 01225 46075 Email: [cfleming@bptrust.org.uk](mailto:cfleming@bptrust.org.uk)

### COMPOSING AIRS: BECKFORD AND MUSIC

Music was essential to William Beckford. Listening gave him comfort, performing was means of escape and composing was a way of immersing himself in creative imaginings.

This year's exhibition at Beckford's Tower will explore the power of music in the life of William Beckford.

7 MARCH – 1 NOVEMBER

## ST THOMAS À BECKET

This year marks the 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murder of St Thomas à Becket.

William Beckford's devotion to St Anthony of Padua is well known, but early in his life he showed an affection for St Thomas à Becket. On his way to Dover in 1777, on the first stage of his journey to Switzerland, he visited Canterbury, to pay respects 'to my tutelary Saint Thomas à Becket'. Timothy Mowl, in his biography, has suggested that Beckford believed the saint was a remote ancestor due to the similarity of their surnames.

Later in 1794 when Beckford made his excursion to the Monastery of Alcobaça his attention was caught by 'One portrait, the full size of life, by a very ancient Portuguese artist named Vasquez ... It represented no less interesting a personage than St. Thomas à Becket, and looked the character in perfection: lofty in stature and expression of countenance; pale, but resolute, like one devoted to death in his great cause; the very being Dr. Lingard has portrayed in his admirable History'.



St Thomas à Becket. Window in St Mark's Church, Bristol.

In the east wing of Fonthill was Becket's Passage, 'so called from the subject of a lofty painted glass window, in chiaro-oscuro, by Pearson, of the celebrated Archbishop, after a design by the late President West' (Rutter). This window is now in St Mark's (Lord Mayor's Chapel), Bristol having been purchased by the Corporation at the Fonthill sale in 1823.

Benjamin West's cartoons for the window and that of St Margaret of Scotland are now at Fulham Palace, the former home of the bishops of London, and hang in the Great Hall.





Benjamin West (1738 -1820),  
St Thomas à Becket, 1797, oil on canvas,  
50½ x 23 3/8in. (128.3 x 59.5 cm)  
Toledo Museum of Art; Museum Purchase Fund,  
1959. .32

Beckford also owned a painting by West of St Thomas. This together with its pendant, St Michael overcoming the Dragon, originally hung in the State Bedchamber at Fonthill. Sold at the 1823 Fonthill sale, they are now in the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio.

A major exhibition on Becket will open at the British Museum this autumn. (15 Oct – 14 Feb 2021).

## A PORTRAIT OF THE REV DR WILLIAM SCLATER (1709 - 1784)



This portrait, by Nathaniel Hone RA, was purchased at Lawrences of Crewkerne, at their 2019 summer sale. After attending Winchester and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, Dr Sclater succeeded his father as Rector of Loughton, retaining the living until his death.

He was a celebrated preacher, and was selected by the Grocers Company to be the Rector of St Mary le Bow, Cheapside. (His brother Richard became a prosperous druggist, and Freeman of the Grocers Company. An Alderman by 1754, but for his death later that year he would have become Lord Mayor by rotation).

William became the Chaplain to the Lord Mayor, Alderman Beckford, in 1769. We may deduce that Sclater was held in some regard by the Alderman, by the fact that he travelled to



Fonthill to be present at, indeed very possibly to officiate at, the Alderman's funeral. (see Perry Gauchi, *William Beckford*, 2013, 273 (note 45).

On Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 1784 Sclater was the victim of a fatal accident. As he was coming up St Mary's Hill a sack of caraway seeds fell upon him from the slings as it was being craned into a grocer's warehouse, and he was killed on the spot. His niece Eliza Draper wrote to a friend after his death:

'My black seal is occasioned by the loss of a very dear relation, a most worthy old man who was killed upon the spot by a bale of Goods falling upon his head... I revere his memory and should lament his loss, if I did not think it wrong to do so, as I have no doubt but he was as well prepared to quit the World as any person who ever entered it.'

The picture, which remains in excellent condition, was engraved in mezzotint by John Raphael Smith in 1777. It has been described as showing a man looking younger than his years, with brown hair, showing flecks of white at the temples, falling to his shoulders, having the broad brow of a scholar, and the serene confident expression of a man at peace with the world, smiling slightly to himself.

Until its appearance at Lawrences it had remained continuously in possession of the sitter's family, and was formerly owned by John Limbrey Robert Sclater Booth, 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron Basing.

Material from the on-line records of the Sclater family has been used to compile this article.

M F RANSON

## IN THE SALEROOM

In the last issue, we mentioned the sale of an entry ticket to the 1823 Fonthill sale. The ticket's sale was reported in a short illustrated article in the American magazine *Fine Books & Collections* (Dec 2019) which gave a brief account of William Beckford and the Fonthill sales.

Dominic Winter Auctions sold on 2 October, William Beckford's copy of Maria Graham, *Letters on India*. London, 1814, in a binding by Charles Lewis. The book has Beckford's pencil annotations on the front endpaper, including the remark: 'Maria Graham unfortunately so totally unacquainted with any Oriental language that she is obliged to stop the moment the English guides fail – this is candid & does Maria credit'. The book (lot 26) sold for £1,450.

## PIRANESI

‘Various are the prospects I surveyed from this imaginary exaltation, and innumerable the chimeras which trotted in in my brain. Mounted on these fantastic quadrupeds, I shot swiftly from rock to rock, and built castles in the style of Piranesi’.

William Beckford, On the road to Bonn, July 1780. *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents*.

This year marks the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the great artist and etcher Giovanni Battista Piranesi, who was born at Mogliano near Venice on 4 Oct 1820.

Writers have over the years commented on the influence of Piranesi on William Beckford. As Robert Gemmett wrote, Piranesi ‘reinforced the distinctive visual quality of his literary works and was a powerful stimulus to Beckford’s own architectural visualisation which would find expression in Fonthill Abbey.’

Beckford makes reference to Piranesi in *Dreams, Waking Thoughts and Incidents*. Noted by many writers is his account of being in a gondola beneath the Bridge of Sighs where his imagination returns to the haunting architecture of prisons from Piranesi’s *Carceri* series. ‘I could

not dine in peace, so strongly was my imagination affected; but snatching my pencil, I drew chasms and subterraneous hollows, the domain of fear and torture, with chains, racks, wheels, and dreadful engines, in the style of Piranesi.’

Piranesi’s activity as a dealer and restorer of antiquities, often for English patrons, is revealed in the etchings he made of the antiquities passing through the Roman art trade, which were later collected in two folio volumes *Vasi, Candelabri, Cippi, Sarcofagi*, 1778.



Antique Vase in the collection of Cardinal Alessandro Albani at his Villa outside Porta Salara.

He dedicated two of the plates to Alderman Beckford, whom he described as ‘Guglielmo Beckford Cavaliere Inglese amatore, e

seguace delle belle arti’  
(connoisseur and follower of the  
fine arts).

One was of a vase at Villa  
Borghese. The second was a vase  
in the collection of Cardinal  
Alessandro Albani at his villa,  
now Villa Albani Torlonia. The  
Cardinal was one of the most  
fascinating characters in Roman  
society: antiquarian, collector,  
dealer, and political agent.  
Winckelmann served as his  
librarian.



Antique vase at the entrance to Villa  
Borghese, with carved masks representing,  
according to Piranesi, either the four seasons  
or the four ages of man.

Volumes of Piranesi's etchings  
were sold at the Fonthill sale, and  
a splendid set in 15 volumes was  
included in the 1883 sale of  
Beckford's books.

## THOMAS WHALEY

During the years 1787-1795,  
William Beckford was constantly  
on the move, living in Portugal,  
Spain, France and Switzerland. He  
was in Paris in 1791, but told Sir  
William Hamilton that he was  
'living with a sword suspended  
over one's head'. He thought of  
travelling to Naples, but instead  
found a retreat at Evian.

Someone who recorded his  
impressions of Beckford at this  
time is Thomas Whaley, who was  
in Lausanne. One day, with a  
group of acquaintances, he crossed  
the lake to visit Beckford. During  
dinner they were 'entertained with  
a concert, performed by a select  
band of twenty-four musicians,  
which he keeps constantly in his  
pay. When we had had coffee, Mr  
B-- played us several airs of his  
own composition on the  
pianoforte, which he touched with  
masterly execution and exquisite  
taste.' Later they travelled to a  
wood where there was a garden  
'laid out in the English taste,  
adorned with statues, and here and  
there with clumps of the most  
odoriferous flowering shrubs.' As  
they sauntered 'our ears were often  
unexpectedly struck with the  
softest music, the performers of  
which were to us invisible, and the  
sounds were reverberated, with  
ravishing melody, but the echoing  
mountains which surrounded us,



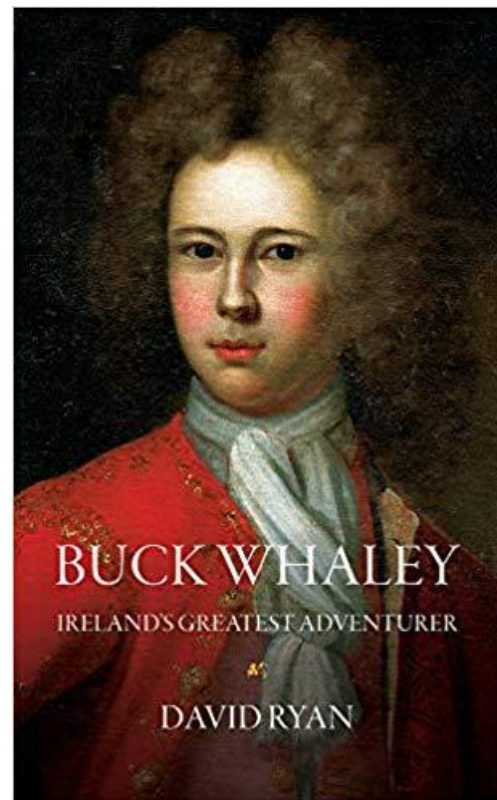
so that the whole appeared the effect of enchantment.’

Whaley was aware of the rumour which led to Beckford’s exile from England, and was himself criticised by the historian Edward Gibbon, then living in Switzerland, for visiting Beckford. ‘The historian observed with a truly pedantic air, that it was astonishing any man would visit a man who lay under such an imputation as Mr B—did: that even supposing him innocent still some regard was due to the opinion of the world ... The only reply I made to his impertinent animadversion was that I did not look upon this little piece of history as any way deserving the attention of so great a man.’

Thomas Whaley (1765 – 1800) the son of an Anglo-Irish family, inherited great wealth at an early age which he squandered at the gaming tables. He fought duels, attempted to climb Mont Blanc, but is best known for the perilous expedition to Jerusalem, made as a result of wagers amounting to £15,000. He eventually retired to the Isle of Man, where he wrote his memoirs. He died aged 34.

His obituary declared: ‘Tis well known that Mr Whaley was blessed with a good understanding, but the whirl and blaze in which he lived, diminished its effect and force in an eccentricity of pursuits’.

In about 1900, Sir Edward Sullivan purchased at auction, on account of the fine Irish binding, the manuscript of Whaley’s *Memoirs*, which he edited and published as *Buck Whaley’s Memoirs*, 1906. More recently a paperback edition was issued by Nonesuch Publishing, Dublin, 2006.



Last year, David Ryan’s biography *Buck Whaley: Ireland’s Greatest Adventurer* appeared (Dublin, Merrion Press). Although drawing on the *Memoirs*, Ryan has used extensive archive material relating to Whaley’s estates and financial matters. To help verify Whaley’s account of the journey to Jerusalem, he has used the manuscript account of Captain Hugh Moore, one of his companions, which is now in the library of a Turkish collector.

## WILLIAM BECKFORD IN PORTUGAL

References to William Beckford appear in the latest works by Angela Delaforce, who has written extensively about art and patronage in Portugal.

*The Lost Library of the King of Portugal*. Paul Holberton Publications, 2019.

Contains Beckford's account of the royal and monastic library at Mafra which he visited in August 1787. Beckford the bibliophile, describes the design of this great library, its bookshelves and the beautiful marble floor as well as a collection of rare editions of the classics waiting to be arranged on the shelves.

*Memories: The Chapel of St John the Baptist in the Church of São Roque*. Lisbon; Santa Casa da Misericórdia/Museu de São Roque, 2019 Published in both English and Portuguese.

Records the critical response of 27 historians, writers, poets, artists and travellers to the royal chapel, commissioned in Rome by Dom João V (d.1750) during the last decade of his reign. However, in November 1787, William Beckford found what he calls this 'remarkable chapel veiled by a curtain', thus denying us what would certainly have been one of his eloquent descriptions.

## WILLIAM COBBETT AND FONTHILL

In August 1808 William Cobbett wrote from his farm at Botley, near Southampton, to his friend Dr Mitford about his visit to the grounds at Fonthill Abbey with his wife. George Mitford (1760–1842), who practiced for a short time as a surgeon and was the father of Mary Russell Mitford, had met Cobbett at a greyhound coursing meeting near Alton, Hampshire. Because of Cobbett's evident enthusiasm for what Beckford had achieved at Fonthill, this part of the letter is worth quoting in full:

*Botley, August 29, 1808*

*Well, we saw Fonthill, but, even if I had the talent to do justice to it in a written description, ten such sheets as this would not suffice for the purpose. When I see you, I will at times give you an hour's account of it. After that*

*sight, all sights become mean until that be out of the mind. We both thought Wardour the finest place we had ever seen, but Wardour makes but a single glade in Beckford's immense grounds and plantations. The grass walks at Fonthill, fifteen feet wide, if stretched out in a right line, would reach from there to London, upwards of ninety miles; there are sixty-five men and ten horses constantly employed in the pleasure-grounds, a thousand acres of which, being the interior and more private part, are enclosed with a wall of squared stone from ten to twelve feet high, with an oak palisade at top pointed with iron. Scarcely any soul is permitted to enter here, and, from what we had heard, we had not the least expectation of it; but Johnstone insisted that, if I wrote a note, we should get admittance, and we did. But not to see the house, which no one as yet has seen the inside of. The outside we approached very near, and, like the rest, it sets description at defiance.*

*Signed 'Your faithful and most obedient servant, Wm Cobbett.'*

(Mitford, Mary Russell. *The Friendships of Mary Russell Mitford, as recorded in letters from her literary correspondents*. Ed. Alfred Guy Kingham L'Estrange. 2 vols. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1882, 1: 41–42.)

After this experience it was understandable that Cobbett should have remembered the Fonthill Estate when intending to replant trees at Botley three years later. Encouraged by Colonel Johnstone, a Scottish soldier, politician and adventurer, he wrote to Beckford from Newgate Prison, where he had been committed in 1810 for outspoken remarks about the Army. In his letter he asked whether he could spare a quantity of cones and seeds that could be planted at Botley. In return he offered Beckford seeds of North American trees such as oak and walnut. Beckford wrote back to say that Mr Milne, his gardener, would do what he could to help, but that his woods had recently been thinned, with the result that there would be few seeds for some years.

Some years after this cordial exchange of letters, Beckford must have been shocked to read in Cobbett's 'RURAL RIDE, From Highworth to Cricklade and thence to Malmsbury' his scathing comments about him and his Abbey, where King Edward's Gallery came in for particular scorn. This passage first appeared in *Cobbett's Political Register* (vol. 60) of 30 September 1826 and is reproduced here close to its original size, complete with the wild italics and capitals which are less evident in subsequent editions of *Rural Rides*.

JON MILLINGTON



vile rotten borough of CALNE, leaving the park and house of LORD LANSDOWN to my left. This man's name is PETTY, and, doubtless, his ancestors "*came in with the Conqueror*;" for, Petty is, unquestionably, a corruption of the French word PETIT; and, in this case, there appears to have been not the least degeneracy; a thing rather rare in these days. There is a man whose name was GRIMSTONE (that is, to a certainty *Grindstone*), who is now called LORD VERULAM, and who, according to his pedigree in the Peerage, is descended from a "*standard-bearer of the Conqueror*"! Now, the devil a bit is there the word GRINDSTONE, or GRIMSTONE, in the *Norman* language. Well, let them have all that their *French* descent can give them, since they will insist upon it, that they are not of this country. So help me God, I would, if I could, *give them Normandy* to live in, and, if the people would let them, to possess. This PETTY family began, or, at least, made its first *grand push*, in poor unfortunate Ireland! The *history of that push* would amuse the people of Wiltshire! Talking of *Normans* and *high-blood*, puts me in mind of BECKFORD and his "*ABBEY*"! The public knows, that the *tower* of this thing fell down some time ago. It was built of *Scotch-fir* and *cased with stone*! In it there was a place which the owner had named, "*The Gallery of Edward III.*," the frieze of which, says the account, contains the achievements of *seventy-eight Knights of the Garter*, from whom the owner IS LINEALLY DESCENDED"! Was there

ever vanity and impudence equal to these! The negro-driver brag of his high-blood! I dare say, that the old powder-man, FARQUHAR, had as good pretension; and I really should like to know, whether he took out Beckford's name, and put in his own, as the lineal descendant of the seventy-eight Knights of the Garter.

I could not come through that villanous hole, CALNE, without cursing Corruption at every step; and, when I was coming by an ill-looking, broken-windowed place, called the town-hall, I suppose, I poured out a double dose of execration upon it. "*Out of the frying-pan into the fire*;" for, in about ten miles more, I came to another rotten-hole, called WOTTON-BASSET! This also is a mean, vile place, though the country all round it is very fine. On this side of WOTTON-BASSET, I went out of my way to see the church at GREAT LYDDIARD, which, in the parliamentary return, is called *Lyddiard Tregoose*. In my old map it is called *Tregose*; and, to a certainty, the word was, *Tregrosse*; that is to say, *tres grosse*, or, *very big*. Here is a good old mansion-house and large walled-in garden and a park, belonging, they told me, to LORD BOLINGBROKE. I went quite down to the house, close to which stands the large and fine church. It appears to have been a noble place; the land is some of the finest in the whole country; the trees show that the land is excellent; but, all, except the church, is in a state of irreparable and apparent neglect, if not abandonment. The parish is large, the *living is a rich one*, it is a *Rectory*; but, though the incumbent

## A BOWL AND PLATE FROM ALDERMAN BECKFORD'S SERVICE



Anthony Outred is offering for sale a Chinese armorial export bowl and plate from a service made for Alderman Beckford. The centre of each piece is decorated with Beckford's coat-of-arms, and the coat-of- arms and heron crest decorate the rims.

Beckford's Tower has a plate from the same service, which was acquired with support from the Art Fund in 1990.

Anthony Outred, 74 Pimlico Road, London SW1W 8LS [antiques@outred.co.uk](mailto:antiques@outred.co.uk)

THE BECKFORD NEWSLETTER  
IS EDITED BY  
SIDNEY BLACKMORE  
THE TIMBER COTTAGE  
CROCKERTON  
WARMINSTER BA12 8AX  
[sidney.blackmore@btinternet.com](mailto:sidney.blackmore@btinternet.com)  
[www.beckfordsociety.org](http://www.beckfordsociety.org)